WE CLAIM.

1.   A system for presenting an item of information corresponding to a selected product having an associated machine coded label, said system comprising:

5   a customer data file including a list of customer preferences, said list of customer preferences identifying the item of information as a preferred data type;
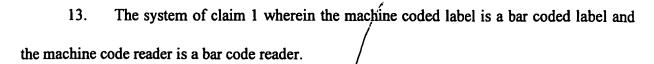
        a product information file including the item of information corresponding to the selected product;

        a portable terminal having an integrated machine code reader for reading 10 the machine coded label, a display and a wireless radio; and

        a product information discriminator for delivering the item of information to the display of the portable terminal upon the reading of the machine coded label with the machine code reader on the portable terminal, whereby the reading of the machine coded label with the machine code reader on the portable terminal results in the presentation of the item of 15 information on the display of the portable terminal.

2.   The system of claim 1 wherein the customer data file and the product information file are stored on a central controller having a radio access point for communicating with the portable terminal over a wireless network.

3.   The system of claim 2 wherein the product information discriminator is a software 20 program on the central controller and the item of information is delivered to the display of the portable terminal over the wireless communication network.

4.   The system of claim 1 wherein the customer data file, the product information file and the product information discriminator are located on the portable terminal and are periodically updated by a central server with the wireless radio.

5.   The system of claim 1 wherein the customer data file further comprises a customer's name, address, telephone number and a past purchase history.

6.   The system of claim 5 wherein the past purchase history in the customer data file is used to generate the item of information presented on the display of the portable terminal, whereby the item of information is a reminder to purchase a product selected from the past purchase history.

7.   The system of claim 1 further comprising a kiosk data entry device in communication with said customer data file for receiving a plurality of customer information from a customer and for modifying the customer data file to correspond to said received plurality of customer information.

8.   The system of claim 1 wherein the portable terminal further includes a deactivation controller for deactivating the product information discriminator from delivering the item of information to the display of the portable terminal.

9.   The system of claim 1 wherein the item of information is a nutritional value.

10.   The system of claim 1 wherein the item of information is a discount coupon.

11.   The system of claim 1 wherein the item of information is a notice identifying a related product for selection.

12.   The system of claim 1 wherein the wireless radio on the portable terminal is a spread spectrum radio working in the 2.4 Ghz frequency band.

13.   The system of claim 1 wherein the machine coded label is a bar coded label and the machine code reader is a bar code reader.

14.   The system of claim 13 wherein the bar code reader is a bar code laser scanner.

15.   A method for presenting an item of product information corresponding to a
5   product selected by a customer on a portable terminal within a self-checkout system, said method comprising the steps of:

(1)   storing the item of product information on a retrievable memory;

(2)   providing the customer the portable terminal having a machine code reader for reading a machine coded indicia on the selected product;

(3)   identifying the availability of the item of product information
10   corresponding to the selected product on the portable terminal;

(4)   selecting the item of product information for output on the portable terminal;

(5)   retrieving the item of product information from the retrievable
15   memory and outputting said item of product information on a data output device on said portable terminal.

16.   A system for self-checkout of selected products having machine coded indicia, said system comprising:

a plurality of portable terminals, each of said terminals comprising an
20   integrated machine code scanner, a display, a wireless radio for communicating over a wireless communication network, a rechargeable battery supply, and at least two data entry function buttons;

a terminal dispenser for storing and dispensing each of said plurality of portable terminals, said dispenser comprising a terminal lock for locking said terminals and a battery charging circuit for recharging the batteries on each of the plurality of terminals during storage of said terminals in the dispenser;

5   a self-checkout controller including a product file corresponding to each of said selected products, said product file including a price component;

a wireless network access point coupled to said self-checkout controller for communicating data over the wireless network;

a facility controller for maintaining a price look-up table including the price component for each of the plurality of selected products; and

an interface coupler coupled to the facility controller and the self-checkout controller for communicating the price component maintained in the price look-up table to the product file in the self-checkout controller.

17.   A portable terminal for use in a self-checkout system having a product information distribution system for transmitting a plurality of in-aisle marketing messages to a portable terminal for presentation on said portable terminal, wherein said portable terminal is provided with a marketing message deactivation command switch for deactivating the presentation of marketing messages on the portable terminal.

18.   A self-checkout system having a product information distribution system for transmitting a plurality of in-aisle messages to a selected portable terminal having a bar code reader upon entry on said bar code reader of the terminal of a predetermined product associated with each of said plurality of messages, said system comprising a marketing message controller

for recording the identification of messages delivered to the selected portable terminal and a message transmission count indicating the number of times the message was transmitted.

19. The system of claim 19 wherein the in-aisle messages include at least one prompt message for the purchase of a non-selected product and said marketing message controller further

5   comprises a record indicating the number of times the non-selected product was subsequently selected for entry into the portable terminal with the bar code reader.

20. The system of claim 16 wherein the at least two data entry function buttons include an add item button and a remove item button.

21. A method for authorizing purchases on a self-checkout system having a plurality

10   of portable self-scanning terminals in communication with a control host which is coupled to an electronic fund transfer system for authorizing credit and debit operations, said method comprising the steps of:

presenting a transaction for payment on a portable self-scanning terminal;

communicating the transaction from the portable self-scanning terminal to the

15   central host;

transmitting the transaction to the electronic fund transfer system;

receiving approval and an authorization code from the electronic fund transfer system at the central host;

recording the transaction data and authorization code on the central host; and

20   transmitting an approval signal to the portable self-scanning terminal.

22. A method for updating a customer data file generated by a customer in a self-scanning system employing portable self-scanning terminals, said method comprising:

generating the customer data file with a portable terminal having a machine code

reader and a radio for communicating the customer data file contents over a wireless network;

downloading the customer data file to a point-of-sale terminal from a data

collection controller which transmits the customer data file from the portable terminal received

5   over the wireless network; and

. updating the customer data file at the point-of-sale terminal to add items on the

customer data file which were not included in the customer data file contents transmitted by the

portable terminal to the data collection controller.